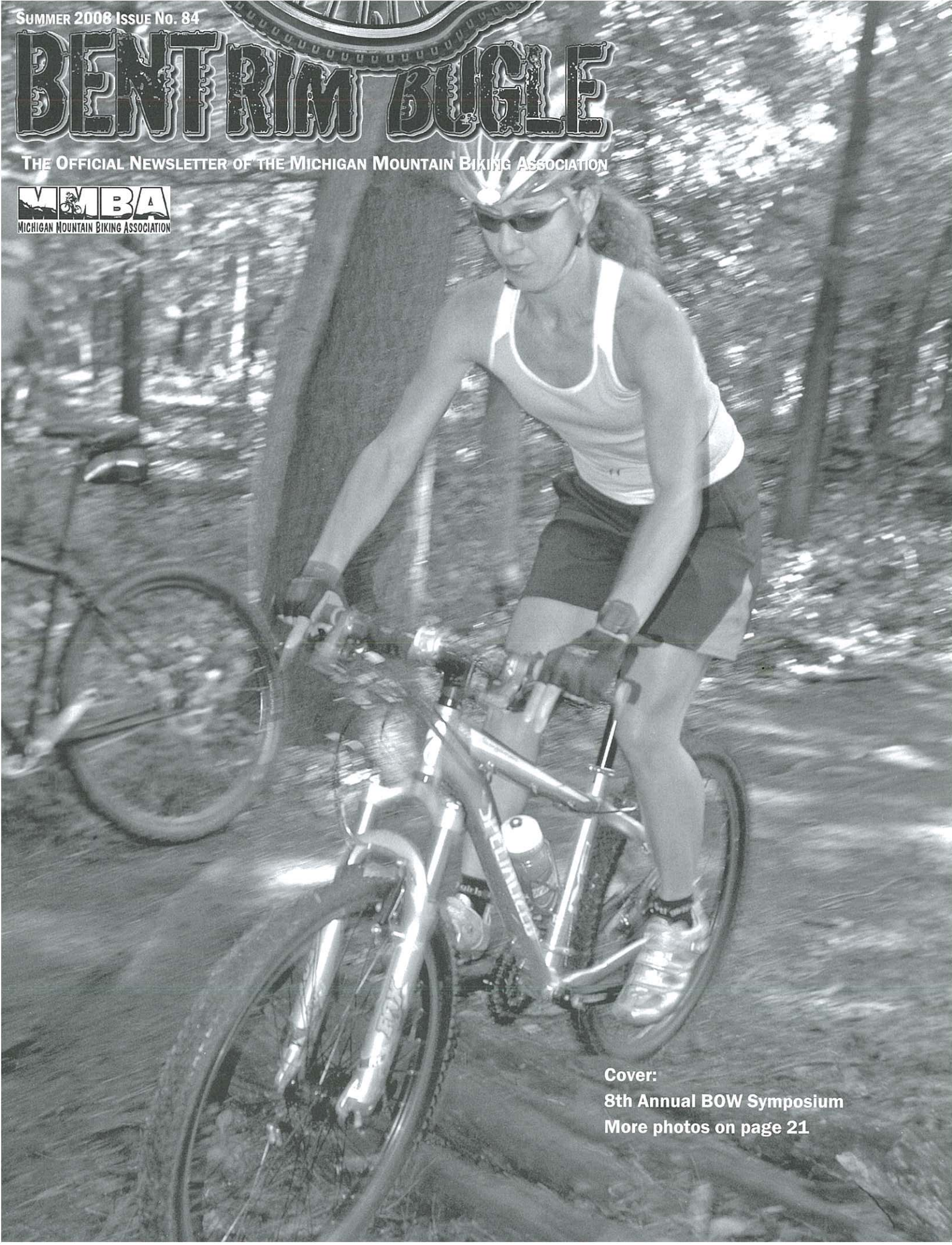


SUMMER 2008 ISSUE No. 84

BENT RIM BUGLE

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE MICHIGAN MOUNTAIN BIKING ASSOCIATION



Cover:
8th Annual BOW Symposium
More photos on page 21



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The Michigan Mountain Biking Association (MMBA) is a 501-(C)(3) non-profit organization. We have 1,600 members in nine chapters throughout Michigan. The mission of the MMBA is to promote responsible mountain biking and to work toward the goals of common land access and natural resource protection through interaction with policy makers, the cycling industry, race promoters, mountain bikers and other trail users. The Bent Rim Bugle is published four times a year (March, June, Sept, Dec.) by the Michigan Mountain Biking Association and distributed to all members. It is made possible by volunteers and riders like you.

Bent Rim Bugle

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BRB Information

The Bent Rim Bugle (BRB) began over 15 years ago. Back then, the Michigan DNR was on the verge of closing all state land to mountain bikes. The BRB was the means for organizing the state's off road cyclists to work for continued access.

Today the BRB still carries the torch for off road advocacy, it has become the official newsletter of the MMBA. Published quarterly, the BRB keeps the MMBA membership up to date on what's happening throughout the State.

Contributing articles, artwork, and photos

If it's about mountain biking, please send it in. Electronic submissions should go to brb@mmba.org. We prefer documents in Microsoft Word, or simple text. Photos should be in jpg format and at least 300 dpi. We can't promise everything will get published, but we'll do our best. For more information on how to submit contact brb@mmba.org

Advertise in the BRB

The Bent Rim Bugle offers inexpensive and targeted advertising which helps with the cost of producing this cool newsletter.

Summer 2008 Issue No. 84

Inside this Issue

4	From the Desk of the ED
4	President's Report
5	Advocacy
8	Trail School
9	Stony Creek Skills Park
10	New Bikes Are Fun
11	Milford Trail Challenge
12	Chapter Chatter
15	Spring Fury 2008
16	Reader's Rides
18	Riding the Keweenaw
19	Way Up North Without a Chapter
21	8th Annual BOW Photos

Contact us at brb@mmba.org for more info and ad rates.

Additional Copies

Additional copies of the BRB can be purchased for \$3.00 each, based on availability. Contact brb@mmba.org.

May 2008 Membership Report

Chapter	Current Memberships	Change Since Last Issue		Change Since One Year Ago	
Holly/Flint	80	+3	+3%	-8	-10%
Metro North	262	-20	-8%	-43	-16%
Metro South	307	-20	-7%	-71	-23%
Mid-State	98	+6	+6%	+4	+4%
Northeast	25	-1	-5%	-8	-32%
Northern	64	+4	+6%	-8	-12%
Potawatomi	223	-14	-6%	-47	-21%
Southwest	117	-13	-11%	-17	-14%
Western	181	-26	-14%	-12	-6%
Total	1420	-61	-4%	-189	-13%

Cover photo by Tom Lining



From the Desk of the Executive Director

By Marne Smiley

The state level of the MMBA has been keeping busy between setting up a new merchandise page to creating an updated corporate sponsor levels all while staying on top off advocacy issues for the NCT to the tree-cutting of the Clinton River Trails.

Some of the things the MMBA is doing for you:

- Mountain Kids trailer up and running
- Actively seeking to bring the best practices of other regional mountain biking clubs including in Chicago and Birmingham, AL
- Researching new locations for the annual meeting
- Official representation on the Citizens Advisory Committee for State Parks
- Membership drive in our member-shops
- Regional Trail school teachers in place to reach more people state-wide

It has been a great learning experience meeting with other regional mountain biking groups. I learned not only how lucky we are as a group, but how lucky I am representing the group. In Alabama the mountain bikers paid \$60 a year for entry to ONE state park as compared to our \$24 for our roughly 100 state parks. In Chicago most the trails are two-way to bikers, hikers, and horses as compared to most of our one-way biking friendly trails.

I am lucky because I am representing committed people like the Stony Creek skills park crew who at the time of this publication will be putting the finishing touches on an idea that started nearly six years ago. And working with shops like Fraser Bike, American Cycle and Fitness, and Paint Creek Bikes and many others who are always looking for ways to help expand the MMBA's message. And finally maintaining a professional working relationship with the Michigan DNR and other city park officials for keeping beautiful parks and trails even though finances are tight.

I am also lucky for the folks like Nate Phelps in the Western Chapter to whom I sent a memo to about Grand Rapids event, he writes back to not only let me know he knows about it, but he is presenting in it. So a thank you to each member who is building good relationships and/or good trails.

If you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me at execdir@mmba.org

The Mountain Kids Program is BACK! We have a trailer. It was an exciting day June 2nd as the Brighton-based Timing Guys donated the final \$1500 to the Mountain

Kids program pushing into the green to finally buy its trailer! The trailer is currently getting its decals, custom storage racks and updated security. We tried to delay this BRB publication to allow it a front page debut, but the timing proved better for Fall, so stay tuned for its photo debut and some events later this summer.

As a recap in late January our Mountain Kids Trailer was stolen complete with all the bikes, helmets, and tools inside bringing the program to a screeching halt. Now only five months later the program is ready to go live again and this could not have been done without the efforts of some key players.

A big thanks goes to:

- South Lyon Cycles for quickly stepping up to replace all 14 stolen bikes
- Motor City Boot Camp for hosting a boot camp fundraiser
- Comedy Castle for putting on an all ages comedy show
- Timing Guys for putting us over the edge for our relaunching fund
- Clinton River Riders for their generous donation of \$500
- Armadillo for donating 100 t-shirts for the "ride it like you stole it" MK shirts

And thank you to the countless other individuals that attended events, donated their time/money, and helped spread the word about the trailer. Every bit made a difference.



President's Report

By Bill Mayer

The 2008 riding season is officially here, but I'd like to take a moment and reflect on the start of this season. The Spring Thaw is always is difficult time of year when you combine mountain bikers with bad cabin fever and thawing trails at their most sensitive time.

In some areas I observed people staying off the trails until they were thawed and dry,

and in others I saw the tell tale pizza cutter ruts. This is an educational campaign we repeat every year, but a larger issue that really struck me was the close call we had with this year's first race – the Pontiac Lakes Time Trail. How early is too early to hold a race? There was still some snow on the ground, but the official word from the Trail Coordinator and Metro North Chapter folks was that the trail was ok to race.

So this year we got lucky, but what if we hadn't? I would like to have an MMBA pol-

icy in place for "Spring Thaw Races" for 2009. If you would like to put yourself in control of the unknowable situation here is my recommendation: Day of Registration for the early races. It may cost a little more, but in the event that the MMBA TC finds him/herself in the position of a asking racers not to race it will allow you to make the call.

\$4+ a gallon gas. As a group, we have a unique position to tackle this subject. Our hobby just so happens to be one of the best alternative forms of transportation out

there. What can we do differently? The first is my favorite, instead of packing up the car and heading to the trail why not ride there? It takes me just as long to ride to Island Lake from Ann Arbor as it does to drive! And I get to enjoy some great dirt roads on the way. Even if it takes a little longer, isn't that the point? Live too far away from your local trail? Talk to your Chapter President. There have never been more opportunities for new trails in MI. If half the MMBA membership tried it just once this summer, that would be 1,500+ people. That's a lot of gas and a lot more time where we want to be, on our bikes.

The second thing I have been doing is a result of the media that surrounded Bike to Work Month (May). Biking to work can be a hassle for some, but these statistics really struck me: - More than half of all Americans live less than 5 miles from where they work.- If people rode a bicycle instead of using a motor vehicle for trips of less than two miles, the majority of motor vehicle pollution would be prevented.- Approximately 40% of all trips are less than 2 miles in length

So even if you are someone who can't get to work by bike, you can still go out to dinner,

grab a beer, make a trip to the store, etc via bike. Every little bit counts so give it a try. I don't know about you, but the more time I spend on my bike the better life seems. Enjoy!

And please note that in this issue we are currently seeking a new treasurer as we are losing our long time volunteer Joe Solecki. And check out the new MMBA on-line store with new clothes, accessories and even coffee all with the MMBA logo. Happy riding.

Advocacy Conspiracy Theory: How Moles are Plotting to Ruin Your Trail

By Jason Aric Jones,
MMBA Advocacy Director

Many mountain bikers ride everyday in a state of ignorant bliss. While they are enjoying the hundreds of miles of spectacular singletrack that we are blessed with here in Michigan, they pedal along thinking that the trails they ride will be there for them to ride tomorrow and into the foreseeable future. The reality is that nothing could be further from the truth.

Everyday, either someone or something is conspiring to take our trails away from us. Do you know what puts your favorite trail at risk? If so, are you willing to help mitigate that risk? If not, who will? If nobody will, is losing your favorite trail something you are willing to accept?

The first step every rider should take in securing their ride for the future is to identify risks to the trails they love. It is a little known fact that the same things that puts your beautiful lawn and garden at risk also puts your trail at risk – MOLES! O.k., maybe not the same kind of moles that tear up your backyard, but the acronym fits.

These are the other M.O.L.E.S. of which I speak:
Mother Nature, Other Stakeholders, Land

Managers, Economics, & Slothful Bikers.

Mother Nature is both friend and foe to a trail. Without her, trails would not roll through beautiful forests and fields, giving us scenic vistas and the outdoor experiences we all seek. However, her forces are also scheming to take the trails away as well, reclaiming them for herself. Her wind causes blow downs that block and litter the trail tread. Her rain causes trails to erode away if not properly cut and maintained, and also feeds the invasive shrubbery and grasses that crowd out the pathways.



Other stakeholders are other users of public trails and lands. They have different designs for the trail or greenspace that you love. Sometimes their plans are harmonious with those of bikers and sometimes they aren't. Some may want to share and love the trail you

love. Some may want to get rid of the trail and turn it into a go-kart track, a place for dog fly ball tournaments, a soccer field, a motocross track, a closed-to-the-public whipsnake sanctuary, etc.

Land managers are the caretakers and administrators of the greenspaces and trails you ride. Some understand mountain biking and embrace it. They realize it is a low-impact and environmentally friendly use of public resources. Others think that if Satan made himself tangible on Earth, he would be riding a mountain bike. Land managers are job holders – typically employees of federal, state and local governments. They

quit, retire, or get fired just like any other employee. What happens when the land manager of your trail who loved mountain biking retires and the incoming manager doesn't know what a mountain bike is?

Economics is defined as the "study of scarcity". Land is scarce. It is finite. Unless you live in The Netherlands, more isn't being made. Public land is even scarcer. Not only do all those "other stakeholders" want it for their purposes, but a boatload of private businesses and developers want it as well. They want to use it to make money – develop it into houses, golf courses, mini-malls, etc. When commercial interests eye up the public land where your trail is located and start lobbying legislature to sell or alter it, trails can quickly become memories.

Unlike the aforementioned things putting your trail at risk, the last one is unique because it is not a third party risk and is the easiest risk to mitigate – it is you. Well, it is you if you are a Slothful Biker. No, a Slothful Biker isn't the DFL rider in your local race. The Slothful Biker is the one who takes no action to ensure that the trails they love to ride will be there tomorrow and into the foreseeable future. They do not combat Mother Nature by doing trail work or routine trail maintenance. They do not go to meetings and engage in social outreach to stakeholders and land managers. They do not write or contact their representatives or peruse the minutes of organizations moving to impact greenspaces. Somebody else will do that. They don't do politics. They just ride – until there is no longer a place to ride.



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Fort Custer Southwest Chapter
Benefit - XC

Sunday, June 1st
Hanson Hills Challenge - XC

Saturday, July 12th
Boyne Challenge - Marathon XC
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awarded!*

Sunday, July 27th
Stony Creek - TT

Saturday, August 23rd
Maybury Metro South Chapter
Benefit - XC

Sunday, September 21st
Addison Oaks Metro North Chap-
ter Benefit - XC

Sunday, September 28th
Pando Challenge - XC

More information:
www.MMBA.org or CPS@MMBA.org



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Trail School

By Dennis Murphy

We put out a call three months ago for volunteers to step forward to serve as regional or chapter trail school instructors- the responses were few, unfortunately. Everyone is so busy these days and I am sure available time factors into people's calculations considerably. So what IS involved in being the trainer in terms of time, materials etc? So what is involved in setting up a trail school session?

1. Focus- What is the goal of the session? Is it a 101-102 session? or a 201 session.
2. Scheduling- This should be done in conjunction with chapter officers and trail coordinators to ensure that you don't have conflicts with other activities
3. Planning- how many people, location, school materials and support materials (snacks, food, beverages, etc).

With regards to materials- this mostly involves printouts of the school materials, tools that were purchased via the REI grant, IMBA books and other miscellaneous items. These are provided by the Trail School. The exception is the actual Trail School 101-102-201 papers which are in electronic format- you can print those at a Kinko's and be reimbursed.

The intent, in the end, is to minimize the pre-session time involved- to make it a "school in a box" (to borrow a phrase from Cris C). The idea is that you can identify a location or need, schedule a school, download the needed materials, email me for the items not downloadable (with enough lead time of course) and coordinate with the local chapter for the support materials

There are several goals I've set for the trail school this year:

- a) get the materials easily available electronically
- b) create a budget format for trail school sessions (in progress)
- c) identify instructors in each geographic or chapter region
- d) get a comprehensive trail school schedule assembled and published for the remainder of 2008
- e) create a trail school budget (state level)

Some progress has been made. The TS 101-102 is in an easily printed format. I still need to complete 201. A couple regional trainers have been identified. Eric Isaacson has been performing this task in the northern chapter and completed a trail school last month. Jason Dew worked with me on a trail school in Allegan last month and will be taking on the role in the western chapter. Also, we are fulfilling the REI Grant requirements that Dan and Marne secured for the school. Weed Wrenches and additional

books from IMBA are on order and will be distributed when they arrive.

If chapters or members have trail schools scheduled- please send this information to me at trailschool@mmba.org right away. On a different note, to emphasize how trail school can support advocacy, trail schools are in the planning stages for Owasippe and in Paw Paw.

Bryan and his team at Owasippe are taking the lead on maintaining the trail there- which lends credibility to the OOEC as the publicize the nature-value aspect of Owasippe's various usages. Maintaining a sustainable trail there helps, in a minor way, fend off efforts to sell and develop Owasippe. Development of that sort will definitely eliminate that trail. I've been working with Bryan to schedule a trail school which will give them additional tools to do the necessary work there.

I was approached by a small group of riders for implementing a trail on Paw Paw High School property. The school views this favorably and was more interested once the idea of a trail school and sustainable trail was part of the planning- the school can proceed with confidence on this project. I am scheduled to do a walk through of the area with the identified trail coordinator of that project- then schedule the school.



Stony Creek Skills Park

By Marty Shue

The Stony Creek Skills Park is building up nicely. The Metro North chapter is lucky to have some very dedicated and talented volunteers who have put in hours of their time to bring this project to a long-anticipated close. After years of planning, designing and negotiating, the Stony Creek Skills Park is scheduled to be open by the end of June. The 4 teeters - each 16' long x 3' wide were the first to be completed, with many more features in progress. The features will be run in a directional course with integrated jump lines with some nice elevation changes. And while the pump track is one of the largest in existence, it has been proven that it can be ridden entirely without pedaling!

Photo by Marty Shue

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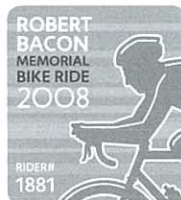
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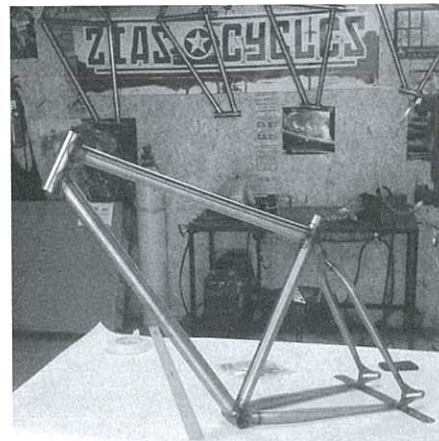
By Scott Silvers, Poto Chapter

It all started one typically cold frosty night at Corner Brewing, in Ypsilanti MI. Seems that Tree Fort Bikes + Arbor Brewing were throwing a celebration to introduce their new beer – the aptly named “Tree Fort Beer” (a uniquely delicious brew). Always willing to do some swilling, for a good cause, I arrived to discover that the MMBA’s Poto Chapter had also arranged for a silent auction fundraiser. Lots of cool items were up for grabs, but the frames of Ann Arbor’s Chris Zias caught my eye. Seems that Chris had offered up a full custom steel frame build for the silent auction, and Superior Powdercoating, would throw in a complimentary powdercoating. Lucky for me, I’d been scheming to acquire a new steel frame, and this was the perfect opportunity.

If you’ve never participated in a silent auction, they can get pretty crazy. It’s as if you are bidding on an eBay item, yet everyone is sitting in the same room hoping you’ll either get distracted while trying to get to the bottom of yet another pint of Tree Fort Beer, or you bail on your bid. I avoided those pitfalls and at the last second, with perfect timing, I secured the win of a full custom steel frame from Chris Zias Cycles – I was stoked!

I met up with Chris after a couple of weeks. We discussed what I liked, and didn’t like about bikes, and what I’d actually be doing with the new frame. I had in mind a bike that could be run primarily as a 26” wheeled singlespeed, yet be easily converted over to a 1x9, or 3x9, if I so fancied such a setup – versatility was the key. We decided on using Paragon’s elegantly designed sliding drop-out system, complete with an integrated derailleur hanger. The bike would also utilize Chris’ signature wishbone rear seat-stay design. After telling Chris that I would probably be jumping off things (no higher than three feet, of course!), he substituted straight-stays, in lieu of the more flexible S-bend stays. And, just to be sure, we measured not only my myself, but my existing Surly 1x1 singlespeed to get a baseline on the new frame dimensions.

In May, I got a call from Chris that my new frame was ready. I zipped over to his shop on my motorcycle and was floored by how cool the frame was. Chris used Columbus Zona tubing, which resulted in some really graceful lines on the frame. Eager to zip up to Superior Powdercoating to finish off the frame, Chris put the brakes on my hastiness by telling me I should first build up the bike to see how everything fits – BEFORE POWDERCOATING THE BIKE. In my haste, I almost made a mistake, for upon completing my build, I realized that we’d have to move some of the cable-stop braze-on’s around



for optimal routing for my Avid mechanical disc brakes. Which is also the cool thing about a custom frame – you can customize it! But, before Chris put the finishing touches, I had to give it a test ride – bare frame be damned! The motorcycle ride home carrying a frame in my messenger bag was interesting, to say the least, but thankfully uneventful!

Maybury was my test trail since it’s close to home. As I pedaled up Hines Drive, I was immediately struck by how well the bike fit. The bike tracked straight and when I rode no-handed, it tracked true with no wandering or wobbles. It’s hard to gauge how well any mtb handles on the street, since there’s not much to do, so by the time I got the trailhead I was raring to go. Compared to my previous steel singlespeed, the Zias Cycles bike takes the handling to a new level. I’ve ridden lots of bikes that were very stable, and bikes that were quick handling, but never had ridden a bike that had these two handling traits rolled into one package. And what a combo it is! The bike holds the inside line with incredible tenacity – much like the sensation one would get when getting a snowboard or skis, hard onto the edge, and just railing. The oft overused phrase “handles as if on rails” really rang true! The frame is a keeper.

So, while I still have a little ways to go, I’d have to say my adventure with Chris Zias Cycles was a super success. Chris is an excellent designer and fabricator, and he really gets what goes into a great riding frame. I might also add that it’s a great feeling to support one of our local Michigan bike frame fabricators, so check Chris out at www.ziascycles.com, and don’t forget the nice folks at www.superiorpowdercoating.net. You’ll not regret you did!



Milford Trail Challenge

By Todd Scott

Another successful Milford Trail Challenge has come and gone.

More than 80 riders hit the mountain bike trails around Milford, including Highland, Hickory Glen, Proud Lake, Kensington, Island Lake, and the Milford Trail. That's quite a collection and variety of riding all within a relatively close distance to the Village of Milford.

And fortunately there are many safe and simple routes between these trails.

"It was a great day of riding, with a few beers and pops along the way," said Bill Hermann, event organizer and MMBA Trail Coordinator for Proud

Lake. "I would like to thank all the volunteers and sponsors that help make this event a success."

Sponsors included the St. George's Café and O' Callahan's Pub, the event's starting and finishing/re-hydration point.

Money raised from the event will help support the MMBA and The Milford Yellow Bike project. Expect to hear more about the latter as the details are worked out. But in a nutshell, it's part of a plan to promote biking in the Milford area.

As for the riders, the reviews were all thumbs up.

"The beer was great, food was great, oh, and yes, the trails were fun," reported Claudia Bean who rode 33 miles. "The heat and humidity just made us drink more beer."

New this year was a cool fancy trail map by Dave Cox.

Riders could choose which trails to ride and end up with anywhere from 7 to 98+ miles. Only one rider, Sam Grebe actually finished all the trails listed on the map this year.

Jon Heft had planned on riding them all in preparation for the Lumberjack 100. "Our group of 7 was whittled down to 4 people - thoughts of doing 90+ miles were quickly quashed by the heat and humidity," said Heft. "My legs were completely cashed by the time we completed our 55 miles."

"It was a great day of riding, with a few beers and pops along the way"

Photos of the event are on the Milford Trail Challenge website, <http://www.milfordchallenge.com/>

Mike Connolly, who's also training for the Lumberjack added, "I had a great time and can't wait for next year."



Event organizer, Bill Hermann (Builder-Bill)
Photo by Todd Scott

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Photos by Rick Smith

First picture (top) is of Bryan Mitchell at Maybury in April.

Second picture (right) is of Bryan Mitchell riding a log at Novi-(Lakeshore Park) in May.



Chapter Chatter

Metro North

Upcoming Meeting Dates: July 21 and October 20th. Meetings take place @ 6:30PM in the meeting room at the Rochester Mills Beer Company @ 400 Water Street in Rochester.

Trail News:

Addison Oaks - New section of trail has not been built yet, waiting to work out the details with the park management. We have the general route laid out, and hope to be putting in the new trail early this summer.

Bloomer - Derek is planning a few trail days through the summer, keep eyes open on the website for announcements of dates. We are also working to get a REI Kiosk installed and forming an official trailhead for the trail once again. We hope to be able to lay out an official trail route with signage this season.

Stony - Efforts are being directed on the skills part currently. As of early June, we have 3 stunts almost 100% completed, and the pump track is just about 100% also. We've had groups at the park working 2-3 days a weekend, and the work is expected to continue through the month. By the time you receive this BRB, the work should be wrapping up.

There is hope to extend the single track in the park later in the year, but we've been keeping any planning of that on the back burner till the skills park project is completed.

Other News:

The chapter order some new tools for use at trail days. We ordered 3 Paloskis and 3 McClouds. We'd like to thank Fraser Bike for donating 2 of the McClouds, and Cycletherpy for donating one of the Paloskis.

Metro North chapter has THREE events that we'll be organizing this year. We will be running the Addison Oaks CPS race on September 21st this year, as well as the 2nd Annual Massive Fallout backroad/trail ride, and the BBBB (Bulletin Board Biker Bash) All of these events take place in the fall, so we'll be working through the summer to organize these events. We have a couple of volunteers to help organize the Massive

Fallout, but we could use help organizing the race and the BBBB. If you are interested in helping out, please send me an email at metronorth@mmba.org, and I'll get you involved. It's a great way to help be involved in the planning of the events, and more volunteers makes the job easier for everyone involved.

Also at our last meeting, John Tartantino of the Friends of Macomb Orchard Trail gave us updates on the trail. The bridge over M53 in Romeo is finally under construction this season and should be completed in the fall. Also, some of the pavement at the Richmond end of the trail will be redone this year, to replace the pavement that was not done up to spec.

Metro South Chapter

Well here we are in the full swings of summer and all the trails here in the chapter are SAHWEET!!!! So go out and enjoy them!!!!

We had our quarterly meeting back in April at Ashley's Beer and Grill in Westland, food & beer were outstanding, plus we got something's accomplished. Had a good group show, around 20 folks plus a surprise visit from our E.D, Marne Smiley!!! We finalized the buying of a tool trailer that will be equipped with trail tools, rototiller & grill to feed all the volunteers. This trailer will be stenciled with "Metro South " MMBA on the side with the REI logo as well. Look for it soon at a chapter trail.

We did a major and much needed reroute at ILRA. It took out a real dangerous downhill that had become eroded badly and we replaced it with a ridgeline downhill that seems to be getting rave reviews!!! This project to 2 weekends to complete and I would like to thank all the volunteers, too many to name for all their help and sweat that was put into this project, BIG thanks goes out to Farmer John, the TC at ILRA for all his work on planning this project.

Big trail day at Lakeshore Park (Novi Tree Farm) where a few new stunts, log piles and skinnies were put in the Expert loop and just some tweaking here and there. Go ride the new stuff and it's guaranteed to put a smile on your face!!!

We are in the process of putting up the four kiosks that REI has so graciously funded. The first one is up and completed at

Maybury!!! The second is almost complete at Commerce (The Hick). Then it's off to ILRA and finally to Highland!!! Thanks to all who helped on this!!!

Rides and events that are happening in our chapter!!

By the time you sit and read this we already have done the Ride of Silence in Hines. Milford Trail Challenge, Great job Bill on another successful event!!!!

Barf at the Farm which was a blast last year and was again this year!! Thanks Matt D for all you work.

Then in August we have 2 huge races in our chapter. First on Saturday, August 2nd will be the 3rd Annual Tree Farm Team Relay. Go to www.teamtreefarm.com for all info and to register your team. This event is a full on HOOT!!!! If you've never tried endurance racing or racing grab 3 other friends that ride and have a go at it, you won't be disappointed!!!

The second race is the ever popular Maybury race being held on Saturday, August 23rd.. This year they are changing the format to a time trial!!!! This out to be a blast, so come check it out.

Well I've held your attention long enough and would love you to go ride all our sweet single-track that is just begging to be ridden. But leave with this one favor I ask of you. Make one of your rides on your favorite trail a "trimming" ride. Take along a small pair of trimmers and lop off some face slappers here and there. If all our visitors at the trails did this then these little buggers would be non existent. Thanks to all who do what they do to make the METRO South trails the gems that they are!!!

Mid-State Chapter

Trail Updates (May 2008) -

Adrian -

Race had a good turnout and building continues in the park. Some areas may require re-routes, but nothing major planned at this time.

Anderson Park -

Trail weekend was a success with a few truck loads of garbage removed from the park and 1.4 miles of trail completed. Be-

ginning of loop was left closed to deter riders before finishing work was done. Pull off areas for parking will be improved in the next couple of weeks and the first loop will be opened to riding. Park cleanup will continue and other groups including the MiGeocachers and Clean Forest Initiative may provide a hand. Thanks to all of those who attended the trail days! Watch the message board for future trail days.

Bennet Park –

The first bridge is completed and 2 more are scheduled for completion. The DR trimmer will be used cut back some undergrowth. Trail building is continuing and will continue next year to include the old river bed area.

Burchfield –

Jeff Popard is the new TC and all structures have been inspected. Bandit building continues and anyone caught illegal building will be fined. Drop zone is official closed, as well as a section along the river. A reroute will be placed in the field due to erosion. The Park director would like to see more people using the trails and are excited about events like the Poker Run and perhaps interested in holding a race. They would like to redo the signs and remove all the color designations. The mountain bike trail will be labeled as advanced and riders can chose to ride the bypasses around the obstacles. A sign maker and Boy Scout troop can make wood signs for a donation.

Ella Sharp –

Chris and Jake met with park and they are O.K. with adding signs. This will be a big improvement for this trail. Reroutes are needed in some eroded areas. Cascade Cycling Club previously maintained the trail, but now would like help.

Sleepy Hollow –

Nothing being done at this time.

Other happenings –

Possible CPS race for 2009 – A group is being formed to begin working on this possibility. Trails that could host in the chapter include: Burchfield, Adrian, and Bennet Park.

Chapter still has pint glasses, sweat shirts, and t-shirts available.

Election of Chapter Officers –

Jake Pangle decided to step down as Chap-

ter President after filling the role for 5 years. We thank him for all his hard work at moving the chapter forward. With his leadership we have seen a recent growth in chapter membership, new trails being constructed, and overall improvements to the Chapter. Thanks Jake!

President – Chris Davis

Vice President – Chris Mensing

Secretary – Brad Potter

Treasurer – Jake Pangle

CPS Rep – David Frost

State Board Rep – Chris Mensing

Northern Chapter

What a more perfect way to spend an early spring weekend in Northern Michigan, than attending the MMBA trail school at Hanson Hills Rec. Area in Grayling. That's what seven motivated students did on April 26th and 27th

The class, taught by Eric Isaacsen, brought together cyclists from as far away as Farmington Hills, Mt. Pleasant, and the surrounding Northern Chapter area.

The two day course covered MMBA's trail school 101, 102, and 201 splitting the days between classroom and hands on work, with pizza and beverages served up at noon. The class worked on two sections at Hanson Hills. The first group put in a reroute and retired a section that was widening and



eroding. While the other group put in a alternative route around a section that could pose a danger to less experienced riders. At the end of the class, the only thing left to do was to gear up and hit the trails to ride our new reroutes.

Come join us on June 7th (National Trail Day) as we work on building a new loop at Hanson Hills. Then on Labor Day weekend, come on up and ride the new loop during the Michigan Bike Festival!



Southwest Chapter

Ground control to Major Tom. Ground control to Major Tom. Take your protein pill and put your helmet on. Ground control to Major Tom: Commencing countdown Denver bound. Check ignition and may God's love be with you. . . .

Our good friend and key member of the Southwest Chapter is moving to Denver Colorado. Since he is a big part of our family, we shall not lose touch with him. Tom understands as well as anyone the principles of sustainable trail design. And leaves us with a legacy of solved problems. Our Thursday night rides could have 100 riders in good weather. Tom would be the guy who shows up when it is just the two of us on the cold and blustery winter Thursdays. The community of Lawler and the land that is now Fort Custer Rec, had been inhabited for 100 years when the government used eminent domain in 1938 to remove citizens and annex land for Fort Custer. Tom and I fed on each others enthusiasm in exploring every inch of what the pioneers left behind. Exploring a dumpsite by mountain bike would reveal details of when and how people lived there. It sort of changes a ride from exercise to expedition. I like that.

Last issue there was a threat from disc golf. There will be an international tournament in our area and several disc golf layouts already exist. The promoter is looking for a mega-challenge for this event and this will be constructed at the Fort Custer Recreation Area. Regional DNR supervisor thinks this will generate \$12,000 for the park and the \$8,500 infrastructure will cost nothing to the state. I think this is a pretty lofty prediction. Disc golf doesn't seem to fit the "natural experience" associated with a state park.

A compromise was made and the install will be made with out the permanence of concrete and with permission granted on a yearly basis using a user permit. This way, if interest wanes in future years after the international tourney, the course could be pulled up and remove with hardly a trace. The straw that broke the Camels' Back. Southwest Chapter volunteers are formulating a plan to dummy proof the Camel Back. On any sunny summer Saturday, hundreds of the least skilled riders come to the Camel Back and enjoy the humps and bumps and

hollows. They ride helmet less on their 40 pound department store bikes in flip flops and seldom have mishap. It is difficult to understand why experienced riders on top end equipment continue to go for big air and land hard on the front wheel. Look for changes on the Camel Back next time you visit.

The 14th Fort Custer Stampede is history, I hope in some way you were a part of it. Let's first thank our many sponsors. Let's start with the shops: Alfred E Bike of Kalamazoo, Billy's Bike Shop of Galesburg, Breakaway Bicycles of Kalamazoo, Custer Cyclery of Augusta, Team Active of Battle Creek, and Village Cyclery of Schoolcraft. Kids race refreshments provided by McDonalds of Galesburg and fruit at the finish by Harding's Friendly Market of Galesburg. Gazelle Sports in Kalamazoo has supported us from the beginning. For many participants the highlight of the day was winning an IPOD Shuffle from HD Audio/Video of Kalamazoo. These sponsors not only deserve our support but each will receive a commemorative DarylInDaryl.com at Little Big Horn pint glass.

Every year our key volunteers step up and provide key essentials necessary to put on a race like ours. Cathy, Amy, Gordie, Teri, Charlie, Linda, Troy, Wick, Wobin, Tom, John, Nickie, Bruce, Judy, Pat, Ken, and Boy Scout Troop 251. Thank you as well Fort Custer Recreation Area staff and the Michigan DNR. Thank you attendees, let's do it again in 2009.

Look for modifications to the Red Loop at Crazy Beaver!!!

Mike Needham
aka Fish'un Daryl

Western Chapter

The western MMBA was recently awarded the 2009 and 2010 Midwest Mountain Bike Summit. What is it? Advocacy education, technical trail building seminars, trail riding, freeriding, and mtb clubs from all over the Midwest spread out over three days. Stay tuned for more information concerning dates and location.

Trail work is well under way at Luton Park. To date the first two loops of the stacked loop system are ready to ride. Currently

MMBA Website Volunteers

You may have noticed some changes on the MMBA website since the beginning of the year, and we have more changes planned for the future. But, the amount of work needed to maintain the website and work on new features is growing beyond the few volunteers currently working on the website, so we are looking for more help.

We are looking for people with following skills to help assist the webmaster and myself with future work on the website.

- Experience with LAMP (Linux, Apache, MySQL, PHP) style servers.

- HTML/CSS.

- Writing, maintaining and modifying PHP code.

- Website layout and design.

- Installation, configuration and upgrading of server based applications.

- MySQL/SQL query writing/database migration

If you are interested in getting involved and helping out, please send an email to vicepresident@mmba.org.

MMBA Online Store

The MMBA online store has finally gotten a much needed make over. Running on new software, we're now able to offer more variety of products more often. As we get the bugs worked out, we hope to be able to use some of the fancy new features, such as gift certificates and discount programs. Check us out at store.mmba.org

Interested in MMBA coffee? Well Mighty Good Coffee in Ann Arbor can help you out with their Big Ring Blend. A portion of the sales of Big Ring Blend goes to support the MMBA - order your coffee online at www.mightygoodcoffee.com

(Continued on page 20)

Spring Fury 2008

By Jay Jones

This race was a resurrection of sorts.

My first adventure race (AR) partner from a few years ago Tony Misovski and I had decided to team up once again. His No. 1 favorite AR partner had moved to Vancouver B.C. for work and it left him with no one else, so out of necessity, he picked me. It's nice to be needed.

The Spring Fury is divided in to two separate races, Expert/Elite on Saturday and Sport/Beginner on Sunday. Doing very well in previous adventure races we decide to attempt our first Elite race....11 hours.

We are prepared with all the things we need, make several phone calls back and forth to assure that we double, triple and quadruple check our lists. We are packed, bikes are ready and the canoe is securely attached to the roof of our vehicle, we are on our way!

Arriving at Yankee Springs Friday evening around 7:30 we are informed our camper cabins are not heated, no worries, I have brought my camping heater and it will help keep the moisture out of the cold damp air....that is until we realize that there are just screens in two of the four windows in our cabin. With the breeze conveniently blowing in the proper direction to come right through our cabin, we improvise and tape garbage bags up across the screens to help block out the breeze. Disaster avoided.

The rest of the evening we finalize some plans, mix some bottles with jet fuel and hit the sack. We wake up 5:00 refreshed from our cool night and immediately start packing. We have a racer meeting at 6:45AM with a race start of 8:00AM. We attend said meeting and learn our fate for the day. We rush back to our vehicle, finalize our packing, address our nutritional needs, do our secret hand shake and head back to the start line. The shout goes out to "Go" and we are running, some turn left, some go straight, the others go right. We are with the minority but it has seemed to work as we are peeling off control points (check points) easier then hitting every drive thru McDonalds on a trip to FLA. Easy peasy, lemon squeezy. Our confidence is soaring until a large group of racers are stymied by control point 3 as it is not described cor-

rectly and is in the wrong place. All of us waste about 45 minutes trying to make sense of it, we learn later a mistake was made placing control points 3 and 10 and the 45 minutes are gone. Not good.

We move quite fast through the rest of the control points in this section with a total of 10, we run to the Transition Area, grab our canoe and portage it a ½ mile to our first paddle on Long Lake, we grab three control points on this lake and head to Gun Lake through a small culvert. Upon reaching Gun Lake we are greeted with stronger winds and elect a direction to go in that we would pay for later. No major mishaps, no divorce court (although I was afraid we would have to summon our attorneys) and we grab all the control points, learn about water tossing a boat around like a bobber and pull the canoe out of the water.

We run to our vehicle in the transition area to change into dry clothes, replenish nutrition, do our secret hand shake and grab the bikes and head off to some sweet Yankee Springs single track. Upon reaching our first major decision on the bike we elect to turn right. With about 15 minutes gone Tony says we should have hit a control point by now, I agree, we take out the map and realize our mistake, we should have turned left. We back track and waste approximately another ½ hour, but we continue on. The trail is in good shape with a few greasy spots, but nothing for us seasoned mountain bike racers. After collecting all the control points on the single track section we are forced on the road (a single speeders nightmare) to grab one more control point and head off to the highlight of my day.

At this point we are at the 7 hour mark of the race. We arrive at the Thornapple River, another control point where we drop our bikes, grab a pack raft and enter the fast, swollen river. I've never seen a pack raft until that moment and both Tony and I got into them backwards. Upon noticing that water was entering his raft at an alarming rate I realize we are in them backwards, we right ourselves and enter the river's current.

These rafts are squirrely, to the point where only a kayak paddle will do when navigating one of these water vehicles. We quickly learn that the water has other plans as it takes us wherever it wants to despite our efforts. Tony is in a hurry and is about 100

feet ahead of me paddling at a heartier pace then I. We have 4 more hours to go, I'm conserving my energies. We are about ½ way through this paddle and I see something sticking out of the water about the size of my fist, nothing to alarming until I realize to late that I won't be able to miss it. Upon contact of this minor obstacle I am suddenly going over backwards in my little water vehicle. Upon surfacing I am 30 feet down the river and about 15 feet from my pack raft, thankfully my glasses are still on and I can see. I start to make a series of split second decisions that will ultimately get me out of this predicament.

I look down river and decide I don't want to go there and look to my boat to see if it's possible to grab it AND keep my paddle in my hand. After both decisions come back in the negative column I decide to swim as hard as I can to make it to shore. This takes quit a bit of effort and I am able to make it. I crawl out of the water on to the bank and try to figure out my next step, I start to walk as if I'm going to hike back to the start of this paddle. I realize I don't have a map but if I had to, I could figure it out. Then I look at my boat and it's caught on some trees about 200 feet down the river, as I shake violently from the cold I make a decision to go back in to the water to retrieve my new most unfavorable thing to do, the pack raft.

I decide if I go out far enough the tough current will carry me to the other side where my boat is. But I have misjudged the strength of the fast moving water and it is taking me directly to a 3-foot in diameter partially submerged tree that has the potential of ruining my day and a lot of other people that know and love me. I'm reeling of split second decisions faster then Hannah Montana tickets at Ticketmaster so I decide to stop swimming and let the current take me past the tree and sad to say, way past my boat. As I float past and under the tree I grab a branch to pull myself closer to my boat and/or the shore. This futile attempt is soon ended as the current pulls me from my temporary haven. I make another quick decision to let the paddle go and try to get myself out of the water before something worse happens. I immediately grab the next set of branches with both free hands and I am able to hang on a little longer. Realizing I can not pull myself up and out of the water my next decision is to let go and start swimming to the

(Continued on page 16)



Reader's Rides

Name: Justin Kreger

Years riding: 5 years

Favorite Trail: Addison Oaks

Do you race? Yes

Favorite race? 2007 Addison Oaks Fall Classic

Other places you toted your bike to: Holdridge; Stony Creek; Bay City, Michigan; Sandusky, Michigan;

Major MTB accomplishments: Completing my first full length lap race, not just the kids grass race.

Ride:

Frame make and model: 2008 24" Specialized Hot Rock in Army Green, black and Silver. 21 speeds

The bike is stock other than a Schwinn odometer/speedometer....and a MMBA Member decal!

Anything special about the bike we should know?

When asked if there was anything special about the bike that he wanted you to know Justin replied, "my top speed is 22.1 miles per hour!"

If you or someone you know wants to be featured in Readers Rides, contact Jay Jones at nativejay713@hotmail.com.

(Continued from page 15)

shore. With another 50 feet gone I am able to get to the shore and the water is waist deep at the edge and I have to pull my tired, very cold and shaking body out of the fast current.

As I crawl to the safety of mother earth, I take a deep breath and make way to my boat. It is caught between two large branches waiting patiently for me to arrive and rescue her, kind of like your favorite dog ever waiting for its leash to be undone. As I walked back to my boat I spied a small portion of my paddle sticking out of the water, obediently it has not strayed too far and I am thankful for that. I devise a plan to hop in the boat, push off just the right amount to carry me next to the submerged paddle, pull it out and continue the paddle as if nothing ever happened. This plan goes off without a hitch and I am soon paddling down river. I round the bend and another racer is also on the shore line making decisions to find his boat too. I ask if he's okay and if he's aware of where he's at and he confirms. I assure him I will let others know of his existence and I make note of where he's located.

I paddle a little further very tired and cold, but realize that movement is the best thing I can do for myself right now. So I keep paddling without any breaks and keep my eyes open for any objects that have other plans for me. I reach Tony and the other boatless

racer's team mates. I tell them of his predicament and his location. Tony ends his social time and we paddle to the pull out unscathed. Cold and shaking but unscathed.

I am asked for our passport and it is in a mapcase that I can not open, Tony assists me and we make our way on to an old railroad bridge to start our 3 mile run back to our bikes. My teeth are chattering like crazy and the whole body shakes from cold, but again, movement is the best thing I can do for myself and I start a slow trot as this is the closest thing I can muster that resembles a run. My clothes are heavier, my pack is heavier, my feet are frozen and my hands have no feeling left in them as we enter the bike drop where our water adventure began. I decide it's not in the best interest of my health to continue on. I've never experienced hypothermia and I was not looking to experience it that day. I make a decision to stop and get a ride back from the Infiteria folks and Tony keeps the faith and packs up and rides off to gain more control points.

I am shuttled back in a warm Suburban still shaking, but thankful for being where I was. I get back to the start/finish, make my way to the car and change into dry clothes. I put on 4 layers with the last one being my down coat. Still shaking and still cold, I make my way indoors to a very large fire place putting out the heat this body requires. I stand there for a while and then make my way to get my

bike and drop bag, organize the car and wait for Tony to finish.

I grab some hot dogs, hamburgers and baked beans to refuel add a Coke and a smile and I am good to go. A few friends finish and it makes the time go a little faster, then Tony arrives looking pretty fresh for someone who has just ran around in the woods, biked and paddled all over the place for the last 11 hours. He eats some grub and we pack up and make our way home.

Every endurance event I learn something, this race was no different. The importance preparation and being ready for anything but more importantly being prepared for the worst, I was not. Although I survived and it could have been much worse and the opportunity was definitely there. If I was out in the middle of nowhere with the preparedness I had, with no help, it would have been much harder. I should have had a full set of dry clothes after this paddle, I did not, if I did, I could have finished the race. Teamwork, it's invaluable. Each team mate must be cognizant of each others weaknesses and strengths, it only helps the overall performance of said team, this changes throughout the race and has to be monitored. And finally, the awesome power of water, simply, it's quite amazing.

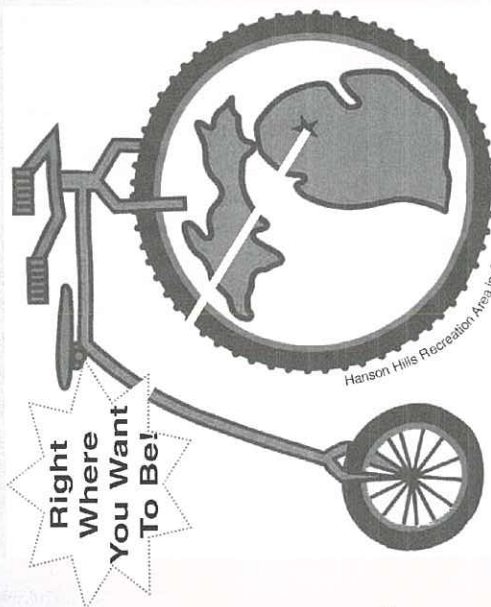
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- Saturday and Sunday are filled with bike rides, bike demos, kids races, and more!

- Saturday night rock out to live music by **"TWISTED FINSTER"** (Featuring Finster from WKLT's own "Omelet & Finster Morning Show")

- Sunday night kick back by the social bonfire to Michigan's own **"WHO HIT JOHN"** (playing your favorite blue grass tunes)

- Monday - Labor Day features the **Lance Armstrong Foundation Charity Ride** (A separate LAF registration and fee is required for this event)

Other Events

- **KIDS BIKE RACES**

- **International Mountain Biking Association Mountain Bike Patrol**

will be on hand to teach basic trail side first aid

- **Learn trail side bike repair from our very own Bike Shop Bob**

- **Uncle Jimmie will bring his legendary jump box to thrill the audience with his bicycle acrobatics. He will also teach some advanced obstacle skills to those who want to experience new techniques and expand their bike handling skills**

- **Bike Orienteering Race Sponsored By River Rats Adventure Racing**

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Riding the Keweenaw



By Diane Ursu

Most people plan their vacations around fun and the sun. Florida beaches and Caribbean cruises are popular choices, especially in the cold weather months. Cyclists, on the other hand, plan their vacations around their bike, or entourage of bikes.

Many Michigan cyclists have ventured far and wide to mountain biking Mecca's such as Moab, and Fruita. Other great riding destinations exist in the southern states as well. When offered the chance to ride challenging terrain with long, fast descents and grueling climbs, most of us wouldn't blink twice before loading up our bikes and driving anywhere from ten to thirty hours to feed our not-so-smoothly rolling addiction. What I find ironic is there is a mountain biking destination in Michigan that you have probably heard of, never experienced, and feel ten hours is just too far to drive for. Hey, it's Michigan! What could we possibly have to offer that's worth that much time in the car? Just across the Mackinaw Bridge – about five-and-a-half hours or so – is a little peninsula that is wildly different topographically from most of the state of Michigan. It shows rather obvious signs of the ancient mountain range it shares its southern border with, the Porcupine Mountains, one of two in Michigan, both located in the Upper Peninsula spanning across Marquette, Baraga, Ontonagon and Gogebic Counties (the other being the Huron Mountains).

The Keweenaw Peninsula is home to several cycling clubs, most of which share many of their members. These cyclists are incredibly passionate about riding and all that it part of it. Compared to most areas, a rather high percentage of these cyclists promote cycling through race volunteering, trail work, and communicating with the various towns about bike commuting.

View from Brockway Mountain. Brockway Mountain Drive is included in the Keweenaw Color Tour held in October.

It is easy to spend one to two weeks in the Keweenaw Peninsula finding new places to ride. There are many scenic road rides offering varying views and terrain from gently rolling hills with some massive hills thrown in here and there, to hours of lakeshore including a grueling climb to the top of Copper Harbor's famous Brockway Mountain. Even to those who find road riding rather mundane, cycling along the Keweenaw roads can be challenging, exciting, and breathtaking all at once.

However popular road riding may be among the local cyclists, for most of them, it is not the road that ignites an uncontrollable passion for riding and a strong desire to do it every day. It is the trail. Three trail systems are located within twenty minutes of Houghton and Hancock.

The "Tech Trails" are located on the Michigan Technological University campus on Sharon Avenue. Well marked by a black and gold sign reading "Michigan Technological University Recreational Forest", these trails are heavily used by all kinds of mountain bikers from beginning cross country riders to lifelong huckers. The Time Trial loop is a technical loop great for learning

and maintaining basic technical skills and is scattered with various stunts for those looking for more of a challenge. Branching off of Time Trial are two other loops offering very technical terrain with enough varying rock gardens to sharpen your skills and satisfy your lust for rocks and skinnies. Michigan Tech is also home to the infamous "Dragon Bridge" and offers a couple miles of beginner trails and some intermediate trails with long, fast, and quite interesting descents followed by equally interesting climbs. The Tech Trails have at least seventeen miles of trail with diversity that is unparalleled by most other trails.

Across the bridge is another really fun intermediate trail system that is kind of a local secret. Churning Rapids, near McLain State Park, is tucked away off of M-203 on Christenson Road. These trails are just fun. While a bit overwhelming to beginner riders, the seasoned rider will absolutely love playing on these trails. From hilly, banked turns to technical, fast descents, these trails are sure to leave you smiling.

Northward, in Calumet, is Swedetown. Swedetown is very easy to find due to a nice sign on the south of town on US-41. The trail volunteers have done a spectacular job connecting the Swedetown bike trails for a large, continuous loop. These are intermediate trails with shorter and more gradual hills, mild terrain, and varying scenery. They are quiet with plenty of wildlife and lots of sweet singletrack.

At the tip of the Keweenaw Peninsula is Michigan's answer to the west. While on a smaller scale, Copper Harbor strikes fear into the hearts of some, and gives others an excuse to try out their new seven-inch travel bike. With over twenty miles of existing trail, Copper Harbor will offer you a mountain biking experience unlike any other. With overwhelming support from the community, land is consistently being acquired for public use and the green light given for the development of more trails. The Copper Harbor Trails offer dramatic elevation changes that cause your legs to scream not only going up, but down as well. These intermediate and advanced trails offer hours of excitement. The trails are easily accessed from the Keweenaw Mountain Lodge just south of town on US-41. Stop in to the Keweenaw Adventure Company with questions and for maps.



The Red Trail goes along Lake Manganese and offers a splendid view from several spots.

The riding season is quite long with the first road riders getting out in March and riding until ski season. Mountain biking season generally begins in late May, when the seasonal streams and waterfalls are abundant, and lasts until ski season, usually November or December. At the height of summer, local riders can be found enjoying the clean, sandy beaches of Lake Superior for a post-ride swim.

The Keweenaw Peninsula offers challenges, excitement, and scenery that every Michigan cyclist should experience. Spend less time driving and more time riding. Come to the Keweenaw for your next cycling vacation.

Useful Links and Information

Bike Shops

The Bike Shop
<http://www.goridebikes.com>
52 Huron St – Houghton
(906)487-9500

Cross Country Sports
<http://www.crosscountrysports.com>
507 Oak St – Calumet
(906)337-4520

Cross Country Sports
103 Frue Ave – Houghton
(906)483-BIKE (2453)

Downwind Sports
<http://www.downwindsports.com/>
308 Sheldon Ave – Houghton
(906)226-7112

Hancock Bike Shop
(not just pedal bikes)
115 Quincy St – Hancock
(906) 482-5234

Keweenaw Adventure Company
(also offers guided kayak tours)
<http://www.keweenawadventure.com/>
(906)289-4303 For more pictures of
Keweenaw trails, go to [http://](http://www.moronacity.com)
www.moronacity.com.

If you have questions, email Diane at Keweenaw@moronacity.com.

Lodging, etc.

Keweenaw Convention and Visitors Bureau
<http://www.keweenaw.info/>

Races and Fundraisers

Keweenaw Chain Drive
Father's Day Weekend
<http://www.chaindrive.org>

The Great Deer Chase
Calumet Heritage Days - August
<http://www.greatdeerchase.org/>

Copper Harbor Fat Tire Festival
Labor Day Weekend
http://www.keweenawadventure.com/fat_tire.htm

Keweenaw Color Tour
September/October
http://cycling.students.mtu.edu/color_tour.htm

Way Up North 'Der (without a) Chapter, Eh! Copper Harbor Happenings

There has been some discussion among Copper Harbor Trails Club (CHTC) members and the Keweenaw Trails Alliance (KTA) about the possibility of forming a new MMBA chapter since the Northern Chapter announced they will be breaking away from the U.P. to form a new North Central Chapter. Preliminary feedback has indicated that these groups will continue to be associated with the MMBA as member clubs (especially the CHTC) and will carry forward to execute the mission and goals of the MMBA on the local level, just as they've always done.

The clubs and four primary trail networks in the Keweenaw (Michigan Tech, Churning Rapids, Swedetown and Copper Harbor) have a solid cast of enthusiasts, volunteers, tools and treasury that have been used to build and maintain their respective trails and organize annual events for some time as representatives of the MMBA. Although formerly part of the once Northern Chapter, based in north-central lower Michigan, no representative from the Keweenaw area

had once ever attended a regular "chapter" meeting in Gaylord or Grayling (6+ hours away) and have essentially been operating on their own for this duration. It is most commonly agreed that not much would change here from what's already been occurring.

As far as the newsy stuff, the CHTC hit the ground running as soon as the snow was gone in late April. Volunteers removed the deadfall to resurrect the trails following the winter, although had to wait until mid-May until things dried up enough to start riding them. Several Club members worked to build some new permanent signs to help visitors more easily navigate their way around the consistently expanding trail network and are the midst of being installed. Updated maps to include over 4 miles of new singletrack built in 2007 and some existing trails that have been renamed have been published to compliment the traditional Keweenaw County-style rustic, cedar signs.

Work is being done to establish a central trailhead at the Welcome Center, in "downtown" Copper Harbor, and will link via two main two-way trails that now connect

with the county-owned Keweenaw Mountain Lodge and nucleus of the trail network. This includes work being done to finish 1100' of intermittent boardwalk to bridge a former black-diamond, one-way downhill trail (actually a drainage formerly known as Clyde's Slide) into a BC-esque two-way intermediate roll. Something you *have* to ride to fully appreciate its magnitude!

The CHTC hosted the 2nd annual *Tour 'da Keweenaw*, road bike ride, on May 17 as an early season fundraiser. Although temperatures were cool and the event is in its infancy, 25 riders came out to ride one the 82, 44 or 20 mile routes along some of Michigan's top-rated scenic highways, at a time of the year when traffic is light. The Harbor Haus Restaurant, considered by many to be the best restaurant in the entire U.P., generously volunteered along with their staff to host a dinner following 'da Tour, with 94 dinners being served. All of the proceeds from the Tour and dinner went to benefit the CH human-powered trails.

Through this and past CHTC fundraising events and a growing membership campaign, the Club has been able to hire a full

(Continued on page 20)

(Continued from page 19)

time employee to work on the trails as his primary job. Aaron Rogers, who has been the CHTC Trails Coordinator for the past two years, has been awarded with this position and now spends 40+ hours a week in the woods in a paid position. While still heavily reliant on continued volunteer support, Aaron's efforts have already propelled this season's trail work forward in a much more timely manner. He will also be in a hands-on supervisory role to lead a 10-12 person AmeriCorps work crew who has been assigned to work on the trails for 5 weeks in July and August. Plans include for up to 8 miles of new singletrack to be built by the end of the season.

The CHTC is also excited to host the IMBA Trail Care Crew, who will be conducting a trail building school on August 2 & 3. Six key members of the Club attended a trail building school in Wisconsin in 2006 and look forward for an opportunity to fine-tune the trail building skills of others who come out to volunteer their time throughout the season. The trail building school is free and all MMBA members are encouraged to attend the workshop. It is hoped that the visit of

the TCC will help the Copper Harbor Trails to gain more recognition and move towards the establishment of an IMBA Epic Ride status, as many feel the trails rival some of the best anywhere in the country in their own regard and are worthy of this designation.

Other news includes an effort by the CHTC on behalf and in association of Keweenaw County to submit a grant application to the Michigan Natural Resource Trust Fund by August 1. This land acquisition project, consisting of +/- 1760 acres will help to keep the current (summer) trail system contiguous and free from fragmentation (currently owned by a timber management company), while providing the prime location for the development of the *Keweenaw Mountain Lodge Nordic Ski Center* and additional summer singletrack trail development. The Club has applied for a Michigan Articles of Incorporation and has intentions to establish itself as a 501C3 non-profit organization. The Club will be all inclusive of Copper Harbor's human-powered trails uses, including mountain biking, hiking, trail running, snowshoeing and XC skiing- including grooming operations.

Plans are in motion for the 15th annual Copper Harbor Fat Tire Festival on Sunday August 31 (Labor Day Weekend). Many past participants agree that this race course is one of the most challenging courses in all of the Midwest, with its rocky, rugged terrain, long grueling climbs and sustained technical descents. Don't let the relative short distances fool you, as it really demands the best of racers' abilities, endurance and technical riding skills, as many say that it's much more exhausting than other races that have twice the distances. The 23 & 13 mile XC events will begin with a Copper Harbor-style mass roll out at 2:00pm, with the Jr Fat Tire, for kids 13 & under, at 12:30. The event will be topped off with a cookout, awards and double header of live music featuring *Step-pin' In It* and the *Mojo Perry Band*. Folks should plan to spend the night! More info and on-line registration at www.keweenawadventure.com. Discounts for early registration!

More info on all Copper Harbor MTB happenings at www.copperharbortrails.org

(Continued from page 14)

there is about three miles of beginner-friendly singletrack at Luton. Parking is at the D&W at the corner of 10 Mile Rd and Wolverine Blvd. (East Beltline) in Rockford. From there, the trailhead is accessed by a wide bike friendly shoulder about a mile to the east on 10 Mile Rd or about two miles east of the White Pine Trail. There are several back-road options to link CSGA, the Ski Area, and Luton Park for eighteen miles of singletrack connected by about three miles (one-way) of pavement.

New regional trail school instructor, Jason Dew, led his first trail school at the Allegan State Game Area on April 26th, 2008. The trail school was attended by new TC Ron Johnston and a crew of 7. The ASGA special because it is one of two state game areas open to MTB (the other being CSGA). It's a little difficult to navigate the trail, but with time this will change.

Changes at Yankee brought out the comments. Some good and some bad. To steal a line from our friends at Founders- we build

the trails that we want to ride. That being said, we are committed to not build trails that that go up the hill and down the hill. Some call it removing the challenge. We call it being able to spend more time doing what got us involved in the first place, riding our bikes.

Lastly we threw a curve ball and changed the direction of the TT this year. If you were there, you either loved it or hated it. I know it kept my inbox full and honestly I appreciate the feedback. Looking forward, next year marks the 20th anniversary of the Yankee TT. Expect something different. After all, the trail can be configured into a figure 8.

Looking for some cool things to do this summer?

June
28th - Group Ride and BBQ with the Rapid Wheelmen at the Cannonsburg Ski Area. Rides start at 4pm, the BBQ is at 6pm.
29th Trail Day - Ionia

July
19th - 2nd Annual "Ale and Trail" group ride

August
4th - chapter meeting
10th Trail Day- Ionia
16th-17th campout at Yankee

September
6th - Trail Day Cannonsburg Ski Area
6th - Trail Day Allegan SGA
6th - Trail Day Bass River
14th Last ride at CSGA for 2008! Group Ride and Party
20th Rippin' Up Greenville group ride

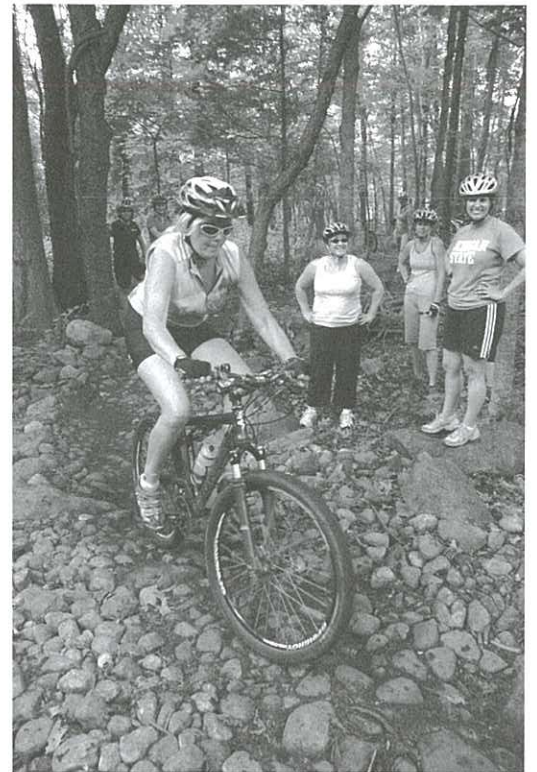
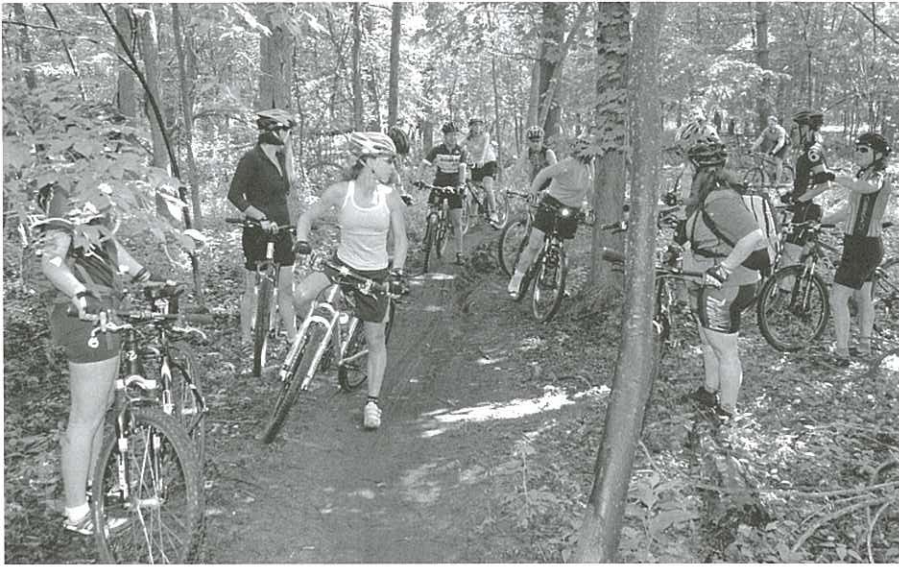
Check western.mmba.org for times and calendar additions
Trail days start at 9am and end around 1pm, lunch included.

Chapter meetings start at 6.30pm at Founders Brewing, 235 Grandville Ave SW, Grand Rapids, MI 49503. Please arrive by 6pm if ordering food.

8th Annual

Becoming an Outdoors-Woman (BOW)

Photos by Tom Lining



The MMBA has teamed up with the Michigan DNR to hold an annual women's mountain biking clinic through their Becoming an Outdoors-Woman (BOW) initiative. Held at Stony Creek, sixty women attend sessions on riding skills, maintenance, nutrition, racing, and more. Year after year, this has been an extremely successful event due in large part to the many helpful volunteers and the spirited participants.



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The MMBA is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation. Donations are
generally tax-deductible less the value of premiums received.
The MMBA federal tax ID is 38-2913713.

Championship Point Series

Add \$7.00 per racer at the start of the race season

Name

Year of Birth Male / Female

Class
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What We Do

Developing and Maintaining Trails

Our volunteers design, develop, and maintain trails across the State, working with every major recreation land manager. Within Southeast Michigan alone, the MMBA has designed, developed and/or maintains over 100 miles of off road trails.

Our trail design volunteers are trained by IMBA using standards developed by the National Park Service and U.S. Forest Service. Trail design, development, and maintenance are performed by volunteers. These trails have a natural compacted soil surface. They use the natural features of the land, are sustainable, and minimize any effects on the nearby environment, including trees. They are designed to require minimal maintenance.

Promoting Proper Trail Use

We educate all users on proper trail use that is environmentally sound and socially responsible through our web site, newsletters, brochures, posters, emails, trail handbook, and word-of-mouth. We also host various ride clinics during the summer.

Involving Youth in Outdoor Recreation

Our Mountain Kids events focus on providing a positive outdoor recreational experience in a "backcountry" setting for children, ages 8-12, who wouldn't normally have the opportunity to participate in such activities.

Our CPS Races also allow kids to build fitness and compete in a healthy, outdoors environment.

Helping Others on the Trail

We've partnered with IMBA to develop a National Mountain Bike Patrol in Michigan. Modeled after the National Ski Patrol, our volunteer patrollers are trained in first aid, CPR, and bike repair.

Encouraging More Woman Cyclists

We partner with the DNR and host an annual mountain bike clinic for woman at all levels. The clinic focuses on riding skills, bike repair, bike fitting, and nutrition. We're expanding this concept to monthly educational rides for women only.

Bringing Together Advocacy and Racing

The MMBA hosts a Championship Points Series, one of the most popular mountain bike race series in the U.S. Racers participate at venues across the State and throughout the summer, earning points based on their finishes. At the end of the year we recognize the top ranked individuals within the racing categories. This series serves as a fundraiser for trail development while exposing athletes to the advocacy side of the sport.



Michigan Mountain Biking Association

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